

year, but in view of the data given by Prigogine from Rwanda and Zaïre, it quite obviously occurs regularly.

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SYMPATRY OF BLACKSMITH AND SPUR-WINGED PLOVERS *VANELLUS ARMATUS* AND *SPINOSUS* AT AMBOSELI The ranges of the Blacksmith and Spur-winged Plovers *Vanellus armatus* and *V. spinosus* are well known to be broadly allopatric, with a zone of apparent sympatry in parts of northern Tanzania and southern Kenya. Most of this apparent sympatry is undoubtedly due to non-breeding Spur-winged Plovers wandering to the south of their usual breeding grounds. In cases of apparent sympatry of closely related congeners it is interesting to know whether the species concerned are ecologically segregated by each occupying a rather narrower niche in the zone of sympatry than elsewhere, and also whether the sympatry applies to breeding birds.

With regard to ecological segregation I have failed to detect any consistent differences in feeding station or feeding method in places where these two plovers can sometimes be observed together (e.g., on the Wembere in Tanzania, and in Kenya at Amboseli, Lakes Naivasha and Nakuru, and the temporary lake present in 1977-78 near Ngong Rifle Range).

Published data and nest record cards (P.L. Britton, pers. comm.) provide no evidence for breeding sympatry, so it seems worth recording that there is one locality where, at least occasionally, the Spur-winged Plover nests alongside the much more numerous Blacksmith. At Amboseli between 3 and 5 January 1978 I watched a pair of Spur-winged Plovers tending a clutch of two eggs close beside the track which runs along the western shore of the lake-like extension of the swamp near the airstrip. Blacksmith Plovers were also nesting, there being at least one pair with eggs and another with newly hatched chicks, but none showed territorial behaviour in the vicinity of the Spur-winged Plovers' territory.

On 4 January at 11:28 two Blacksmith Plovers flew over the Spur-wings' territory and landed about 30 m away. The sitting Spur-wing flew up when it saw the Blacksmiths flying over, and then approached them on the ground in a 'forward threat crouch'; this was ignored by the Blacksmiths, who wandered away. At 12:29 the sitting Spur-wing saw two Blacksmiths behind the nest, went into a 'threat crouch' at the nest and then flew towards the Blacksmith Plovers, landing just in front of them. No display was given by either species but the Blacksmiths flew away. I was surprised by the low level of aggression induced by intruding Blacksmith Plovers, as other waders (Ringed Plover *Charadrius hiaticula*, Kittlitz's Sandplover *C. pecuarius*, Black-winged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Little Stint *Calidris minuta* and Marsh Sandpiper *Tringa stagnatilis*) feeding at the water's edge were attacked with vigour and driven away, although Yellow Wagtails *Motacilla flava* feeding very close to the nest were ignored.

Although the above nest is the only breeding record that I have for Spur-winged Plovers at Amboseli, I saw adult birds (never more than two) at this site on every subsequent visit, the last occasion being 28 October 1979.

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